

The Archbishop of Crete speaks about shipwrecks and immigrants: “They are all children of God”



In light of the recent shipwreck in the Mediterranean basin, His Eminence Archbishop Evgenios of Crete spoke exclusively to neakrtiti.gr, making it clear that: “All human persons are children of God.” His message being anthropological.

The Primate of the Church of Crete asks for the agreement of the nation’s so that we do not see again such images that offend the dignity of the human person, while referring to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, pointed out that insulting the dignity of the human person also means insulting the sanctity of the person.

Archbishop Evgenios of Crete, speaking to neakriti.gr made the following statement: “With deep sorrow, we watched once again what happened in the Mediterranean sea, which from a sea of peace is literally turning into a cemetery. We must raise our voice against the phenomena of human exploitation and slavery. Our Ecumenical Patriarch said so. It has been said by many spiritual people of our times that the fact that life is degraded means that the dignity of the person and its sanctity are lost with such moves made by ‘people who traffic other people’”, he said.

At the same time, he emphasised: “I think we should engage in some self-criticism and finally there should be a serious discussion about immigration in Europe. We often – begrudgingly – watch it. A few days ago, there was a shipwreck in Heraklion where 80 people who were victims of the slave trade arrived. I don’t know if the responsible authorities are taking the necessary measures. And when I mean competent authorities, I don’t mean the people who are on the receiving end. I mean those authorities which are the starting point of flight and departure, the authorities of emigration. These countries must sit at a dialogue table and agree on what is best to do.

It is not possible for countries to receive these images of the shipwrecks that we

are seeing at periodic and regular intervals. I don't know how much we can tolerate or if we should tolerate seeing images of the dead. Let us keep two words in mind: paying tribute to the innocent victims of this recent shipwreck and all other shipwrecks that lead to death in the Mediterranean, we feel the need to raise our voice loudly against all forms of human slavery, oppression and expatriation. Many of us, speaking as a refugee ancestor, know from our own homes and families what it means to be a refugee, and what immigration means.

And we know that what happens to them is not at all easy for the mental state of people. In the end, do we see them as images of God – as our brothers and sisters and children of the same Father or as children of a lesser God? We Orthodox Christians have a certain view of all other people even if they don't believe what we believe or don't have the same values or principles. All people are children and images of the same God and should be treated as such."

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